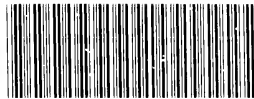


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THE RESURRECTION FROM DEATH.

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PREFACE.

The following pages were written upon reading Rev. Mr. Munhall's book on "The Return of Christ to Earth." In it he has said a great deal on the doctrine of the resurrection. The writer of this has tried to state the doctrine as it appears to his own mind it should be stated. He is well aware that he will meet with opposition from some quarters for the views he has taken, and many who are stereotyped in the belief of the resurrection of the *body* will look with holy horror upon the position here taken; and the cry will go up "Heterodoxy!" He therefore challenges any one to find a sentence in the Scriptures where it speaks of the resurrection of *the body*. The writer is indebted for many of his ideas, to Bishop Foster, to B. Stewart and P. G. Tait's "Unseen Universe," to Luther T. Townsend, D. D. to Israel P. Warren and to the Metaphysics of Prof. Bowne of Boston University, and also to many of the Greek philosophers.

EDWARD DRAKE ROE, Sr.

CHAPTER I.

RATIONAL CONSIDERATIONS.

The writer has read the Rev. Mr. Munhall's book on "The Return of Christ to Earth." As to the second coming of Christ, he has abandoned all theories in regard to it. He thinks it impossible to form any correct conclusion about it from the gospels or from the Revelations, as they are all figurative and symbolical. The only thing to do about it is to obey the command: "Be ye also ready for in such an hour as ye think not the Son of Man cometh." Whether this means the coming at one's death or at the coming of the so-called judgment day the writer does not pretend to say. Nor can he agree with Mr. Munhall's arguments about the so-called final resurrection morning. All of his arguments are like a sieve; they are full of holes and will not bear criticism according to the New Testament scriptures. For instance he cites from Romans the 8th Chap. and 23d verse where Paul is speaking about "waiting for the adoption, to wit: the redemption of our body." Now if any one will read what Paul says before and what he says after, he must be convinced he has no reference to the resurrection of the body. What does it mean to be redeemed but that one is saved from all his sins both of soul and of body? The body is rid of all sensual appetites, such as eating, and drinking or indulging in any sinful desire. The body is clean from all such things, and the body and soul that have been "redeemed" hate sin as they would hate

the Devil— not that they might not commit sin. but that they would be very apt not to do so. Again, in another place the expression: “who shall change our vile body, that it may be fashioned like unto his glorious body” certainly cannot mean going down into the grave in order that the body may be resurrected like his most glorious body. Not at all; we lay down our *vile* bodies *never* to take them up again; no, *never*.

On the other hand we (the saints) do take our spiritual bodies at the death of the body, thus to remain with Christ forever.

Again, according to his reasoning all the saints from Abel down to the present time are “awaiting” the resurrection of the body after being in Paradise for thousands of years, and in the so-called morning of the resurrection those bodies somehow will be fitted up to supply souls that have been enjoying the presence of God and angels for ages, and these souls will somehow be reunited with those old bodies that have gone back to their original elements hundreds of times over. Again: The bodies of all the saints that have perished by wild beasts, alligators, sharks, and cannibals, you must admit, have gone into other bodies, and have been transmuted a hundred times over; now in the resurrection so-called whose bodies will these be? Will the cannibal fight for a body, or will the wild beast say it is his body? or upon what ground can the matter be settled?

The writer confesses he can see no way out of the dilemma except that God would have to bring the force of heaven and make a new creation for the body of every saint, or keep bodies made to order for that day which is called the “morning of the

esurrection." But this would be too ridiculous to think of, therefore one is compelled to fall back on the theory of a Spiritual resurrection at death. And this the writer believes to be the theory and teaching of the Scriptures. Longfellow expressed it well when he wrote:

"There is no death;
What seems so is transition:
This life of mortal breath,
Is but the suburbs of the elysian,
Whose portal we call death.
The grave is not our goal,
Dust thou art, to dust return,
Was not spoken of the soul."

Again, the old song of John Brown had more theology in it than perhaps the writer dreamed of when he wrote:

"John Brown's body lies a mouldering in the grave,
And his *soul* goes marching on,

Glory, glory, hallelujah."

There is a great deal of sentimentalism in writing about the resurrection. For instance in writing obituaries of saints who have died in the faith it is very common to say: "We laid him (or her) away in the beautiful cemetery there to "*await*" the morning of the resurrection." Yes, Abel has been "waiting" these 6000 years with all the other saints. Dr. Watts too is very fond of saying in his hymns:

"Looks down and watches all my dust,
Till he shall bid it rise."

Again he says:

My flesh shall slumber in the ground,
Till the last trumpet's joyful sound ;

Then burst the chains with sweet surprise,
And in my saviour's image rise."

Again:

"Up to the Lord my *flesh* shall fly,
At the great rising day."

Again (and how does this agree with the others) he says:

"Grant us the power of quick'ning grace,
To fit our *souls* to fly;

Then when we drop this dying flesh,
We'll rise above the sky."

Mr. Charles Wesley also says:

"Five bleeding wounds he bears,
Received on Calvary."

Dr. Townsend says: "this is some of Charles Wesley's poetry."

It has always been surprising to the writer how educated men can torture the Scriptures so much and make such foolish quotations and misapply the Scriptures so as to make them agree with *their pet* theories, instead of making their theories correspond with the Scriptures. But so it seems to be, it is hard to give up old preconceived notions or beliefs. Mr. Munhall seems to speak very gingerly of John Milton. The writer has read John Milton's *Paradise Lost* and *Paradise Regained* and thinks that he has never read the story of our first parents so beautifully told in blank verse. His *Paradise Regained* is a most exciting, captivating, and beautiful story—but one must understand that he is reading a poem when he reads it. The same is true of the books of Job and of the book of Psalms, and Isaiah.

Poets play more or less upon the imagination.

What book is quoted oftener than Shakspeare? And what book is so full of imagination?

If the writer's theory be correct (and he is in accord with some of the best thinkers of the age,) then all of this fog about a future general resurrection vanishes, and the doctrine is perfectly clear and Scriptural.

Now, as for a general judgment day, as it is so called, there is but very little to say. Mr. Munhall suits the writer better than Dr. L. T. Townsend of Boston University, for it does not seem that the Revelations can be taken literally in respect to the judgment day. Again: if one takes the answer of Jesus as given to the disciples about the end of the world, and the destruction of Jerusalem, one is very apt to get the answers mixed, for two questions were asked and two were answered.

As to what becomes of the wicked let Esdras answer, Esdras. 9th Chap. 13th verse says: "And therefore be not thou curious how the ungodly shall be punished and when; but inquire how the righteous shall be saved, whose the world is and for whom the world was created."

The writer has been pleased to read Mr. Munhall's book and is willing to read any book that will give him any information, whether he agrees with it or not.

These few pages do not pretend to cover in detail all the ground involved in the doctrine of the resurrection. It would take a large book to do that. The reader will observe that Scriptural arguments have been omitted in this chapter. Reason has been consulted. The writer insists that we must use reason in interpreting Scripture and we can use reason in religion without being rationalists. "All Scripture

is given by inspiration of God and is profitable for doctrine, for reproof, and for correction in righteousness." But reason is a *direct creation of God in the soul*, even prior to all data which must come up before it. And in its divine light, the divine data of the Scriptures must be explored, and made to be consistent among themselves, and to afford a system wherein the union of a predicate with a subject is a thinkable thing and not an absurdity. We will turn now more especially to Scriptural considerations.

CHAPTER II.

SCRIPTURAL CONSIDERATIONS.

We read in Daniel 12th Chap. and 2d verse, "And *many* of them that sleep in the dust of the earth shall awake, some to everlasting life, and *some* to shame and everlasting contempt." 3d verse "And they that be *wise* shall shine as the brightness of the firmament, and they that turn many to righteousness as the stars for ever and ever." The parallel passage John, 5th Chap, 25th, 28th and 29th verses is: "Verily, verily, I say unto you the hour is coming and now is, when the dead shall hear the voice of the Son of God: and they that hear shall live. Marvel not at this: for the hour is coming in the which all that are in the graves shall hear his voice, and shall come forth; they have done good, unto the resurrection of life, and they that have done evil unto the resurrection of damnation."

In the first place who are the dead, spoken of above? They are the ungodly dead or those who have died without ever having any knowledge of Christ. Surely it cannot be supposed that all who have died without a knowledge of Him will perish everlastingly. But some one will say does not this mean a second or a future probation? The writer's answer is, No. Did not Christ descend into Hades or the grave and preach to the spirits in prison?

They that were *wise* as Daniel says accepted of Christ then and there, and consequently were raised to everlasting life, and will shine as the brightness of the firmament. They who have done good are they who accepted of Christ as the thief did.

upon the cross. When he first believed that Jesus was the Christ, he said while on the cross, "Lord remember me when thou comest into thy kingdom." Jesus answered and said: "To day shalt thou be with me in Paradise." I doubt not, if all the Devils in hell to day would lay down their weapons of rebellion, Jesus Christ would accept of them and this earth would become a Paradise again. But they will not cease to rebel any more than a lost soul who has had opportunities time and again will repent in Hades. For it will not have the desire to repent. Consequently the writer can see no place as a matter of fact for a second future probation. Yes. All who are in their graves will come forth to judgment at the last, and receive their sentence according to their transgressions.

David says: "The wicked shall be turned into hell with all the nations that forget God." Jude also says "They are raging waves of the sea, foaming out their own shame; wandering stars, to whom is reserved the blackness of darkness for ever." Christ has also said: "Depart from me ye workers of iniquity into everlasting fire prepared for the Devil and his angels." Jude says again: "The angels that kept not their first estate but left their own habitation, he hath reserved in everlasting chains under darkness (Tartaros) unto the judgment of the great day."

Now what is it to be absent from the body and to be present with the Lord? Saint Paul says in 2d Corinthians, 5th Chap. and 1st verse: "For we know if our earthly house of this tabernacle were dissolved, we have a building from God, an house not made with hands eternal in the heavens." It would seem from this that the sleep of death so often

spoken of in the Scriptures cannot mean the unconsciousness of the soul so many thousands of years. No, one cannot believe any such thing. It is neither Godlike nor Scriptural. For why would the thief on the cross be more favored than all the saints that have died, and were martyred or tortured, or thrown to wild beasts? No, one cannot for a moment believe it. Moreover it seems from all we can gather from the Scriptures, that the souls of the righteous go directly to God. "The spirit returns to God who gave it."

When Christ said to Nicodemus: "Ye must be born again" he could not see how it could be unless he entered the second time into his mother's womb and was born again. He could not see that it was a spiritual birth as well as a spiritual resurrection that was signified. So also when Christ told the people about the resurrection from the dead, the Sadducees could not seem to understand it was to be a spiritual resurrection, but some how they thought it must be a resurrection of that body that went down into the grave, but Jesus told them plainly: "That which is born of the flesh is flesh; and that which is born of the spirit is spirit." He also told them that in the resurrection the saints should be *as the angels which are in heaven*. Are not all his angels *ministering spirits*? if so of what use would this body be after thousands of years, and ages had passed away? It would seem to be absurd to talk of the resurrection of the body when God has provided so gloriously for a spiritual existence.

In the transfiguration on the mount where Christ revealed himself to his disciples, with Moses and Elias, their robes were white and dazzling. They

were all in a state of spiritual and glorified existence so far transcending earthly and bodily existence that the very contrast by its sublimity rendered the earth born disciples as good as speechless. Again what better body do we want than a *spiritual body* which is adapted to all our wants in a spiritual world? In second Corinthians, 5th Chap 8th verse, where Paul says: "I say then if we are willing rather to be *absent* from the *body* and at home with the Lord;" what is meant but our risen spiritual body? Why should we want our dead body reunited with our spiritual body, and as is often said: "*wait* till the morning of the resurrection for such reunion? Why wait? for are we not already as Paul says, "at home with the Lord? Again, are Abraham, Isaac and Jacob "WAITING" all this time? No, one cannot believe it, neither is there any reason for it. It is not God like. It will be observed in the gospels and so on through Paul's epistles that the expression, "raising *of* the dead" and "the resurrection *from* the dead" are used interchangeably.

When Christ was here upon earth he did raise many who were dead, to life again, but all such raised ones *died again*. All who are raised *from* the dead take on their spiritual bodies at their natural death "to be *forever with the Lord*." Again it will be observed there are two kinds of dead, to-wit: the ungodly dead and "*they who die in the Lord*." Those who "die in the Lord" are they who have part in the first resurrection spoken of in the Revelation. Those who die the death of the wicked are they who go into Hades, *there to await* the final or second resurrection spoken of by Daniel. (12th Chap.) They go to everlasting damnation.

It is often urged that God *can* bring together all the dust of the body. But the question is will he

do all he can, just for the sake of showing his power? or for the sake of a theory which has to resort to such expenditures of miracles on the part of God, as against a theory which is simple and natural, and satisfies both reason and Scripture? When did Christ ever work a miracle! for the sake of a miracle? no one knows of any such. He did turn the water into wine at the wedding because it was the custom to have it at such times, but no one knows of his ever working a miracle for the sake of a miracle. He could have turned water into wine directly as well as to pass the water through the vine and so into the juice of the grape, but it seems he does not see best to do it. Or He *could* have made more moons than one to light this earth by night, but he did not so order it. What God can do and what he will do for his own glory and for our good are two very different things. We might as well suppose that in his own appointed time he would create several other moons for this earth as to *suppose* that he would restore to every soul its own dust after the soul had taken part in spiritual life for ages without it, and after the dust had passed for ages into its original elements, and even to do this as was said in the preceding chapter, God would have to make a new creation. But there is no warrant for this either in Scripture or in reason.

What Christ said to Martha at the grave of Lazarus, it would seem ought to satisfy anyone that the righteous do not wait as many suppose for the resurrection of the last day, for he answered her like this: "I am the resurrection and the life." (that seems to be now and not some thousands of years hence.) Then he says: "He that believeth on me shall *never die*." This does not seem to look much as if the righteous would remain for ages, and

ages and then be resurrected. No; that would be a bootless task. Again he has said: "I am the God of Abraham and of Isaac and of Jacob. I Am *not a God of the dead but of the living.*"

Again—The rich man recognized Lazarus in Abraham's bosom, hence each must have possessed some kind of identity; and if such identity, then some kind of a body, and if *any* kind of a body, it must have been a spiritual body. As Saint Paul has said: "*It is raised a spiritual body.*"

Paul will be quoted farther on, the writer knows no place in the Bible where it says: "The body that goes down into the grave or Hades," except it be in the case of the ungodly that lie till the last trumpet shall sound and call their spirits forth to meet their final sentence, as in Daniel the 12th Chap. and 2d. verse where it reads: "And *many* of them (*not all*) that sleep in the dust of the earth shall awake, *some* to everlasting life and some to shame and everlasting contempt." And the writer cannot here forbear expressing a wish that if his obituary should be written, it may not read like this: "We laid him away in the beautiful cemetery, there to await the resurrection of the just." No. He believes that his spirit will be clothed in a spiritual body, and that he will experience a spiritual resurrection of his spirit, instead of a material one of his body. No. It is *earth* to *earth* and *ashes* to *ashes*; and this of the body. We are to "*be like the angels of heaven*"—this ought to satisfy any body:

"The garments that hell give to me,
The sun it will outshine;
And to glory I will go, will go,
And to glory I will go."

“ Tradition claims that after Lazarus had been raised from the dead, for fear of the Jews, he fled to Cyprus and became the Bishop of Citrium, the ancient representation of Larnaka, and subsequently died in this city. The identity of the tomb rests upon the legend that his bones were in Cyprus, A. D., 890.”

“ Plato represents Socrates as saying in the last hour of his life : “ You may bury me if you can catch me.” He then added, with a smile, and an intonation of unfathomable thought and tenderness : “ Do not call this poor body Socrates.” I would not have you sorrow at my hard lot, or say at the interment : “ Thus we lay out Socrates,” or “ Thus we follow him to the grave, or bury him.” “ *Be of good cheer ; say that you are burying my body only.*”

Dr. Adam Clarke, says in his commentary : “ It is difficult to account for the transaction mentioned in 27th Chap. of Matth. in verses fifty two and fifty-three. Some have thought that these two verses have been introduced into the text of Matth. from the gospel of the Nazarines ; others think that the simple meaning is this : By the earthquake several bodies that had been buried were thrown up and exposed to view, and continued above ground till after Christ’s resurrection, and were seen by many persons in the city. Why the graves should be opened on *Friday* and the bodies not be raised to life till the following Sunday is difficult to be conceived. The place is extremely obscure.”

In his commentary on Luke, 23d Chap., and 43d verse are the following words : “ A man habitually pious, whose offences have been expiated, is

instantly conveyed, after death, to the higher world, with a radiant form, and a body of ethereal substance." Again in verse 46 he says: "Into thy hands I commit my spirit." Or I will commit my spirit—I deposit my soul into thy hands. Another proof of the immateriality of the soul, and of its separate existence when the body is dead." This may be speculative theology for aught I know.

I quote from Dr. Clarke once more, Matth. 23d Chap. and 10th verse. He says: "Another lesson which our blessed Lord teaches here is, that no man is *implicitly* to receive the *sayings, doctrines* and decisions of man, or number of men, in the things which concern the interests of his immortal soul.

Christ, his spirit, and his word are the only infallible teachers—Every man who wishes to save his soul must search the scriptures, by prayer and faith. —Reader, take counsel with the pious; hear the discourses of the wise and holy, but let the book of God ultimately fix thy creed.

Dr. Clarke says in his commentary on the 15th Chap. of first Corinthians 44th verse: "The Jews have an opinion that the Os coccygis, the lower joint of the backbone, survives the corruption of the body; and that it is out of this bone that the resurrection body is formed." "Thus does the holy blessed God: He *first* buries our bodies under the earth when they putrify and corrupt, and nothing remains but that one bone; from this a new body is produced, which is indeed a *body*, but not a *perfect body*. But in that great day, when all bodies are hidden in the earth, and the soul departs, then even that bone decays, and the body which was formed out of it remains, and is as the light of the sun and the *splendor of heaven*." If this is not

speculative theology, then the writer does not know what is !

Plutarch's *Life of Romulus* says : "We should therefore reject fables, when we are possessed of undeniable truth ; for according to Pindar: The body yields to death's all powerful summons, while the bright image of eternity survives. This alone is from the Gods : From heaven it comes, and to heaven it returns ; not indeed with the body ; but when it is entirely set free and separate from the body, when it becomes disengaged from every thing sensual and unholy. For in the language of Heracletes the *pure soul* is of superior excellence, darting from the body like a flash of lightning from a cloud ; and immersed in sense like a heavy and dark vapor, with difficulty is kindled and aspires. There is therefore no occasion, against nature to send the bodies of good men to heaven ; but we are to conclude, that virtuous souls, by nature and the divine justice, rise from men to heroes, from heroes to genii ; and at last as in the mysteries, they be perfectly cleansed and purified, shaking off *all remains* of mortality and all the power of the passions, then they finally attain the most *glorious*, and *perfect* happiness, and ascend from genii to *Gods*, not by a vote of the people, but by the just and established order of nature."

In conclusion the reader is asked to read first Corinthians 15th Chap. beginning at the 35th verse, and to read carefully to the end of the chapter. It seems that this ought to convince any unprejudiced mind, but if it does not, whoever is disinclined to believe this, "neither will he be persuaded though one rose from the dead."

APPENDIX.

In the burial service for the dead in the M. E. Church discipline, the 9th Chap. of Job and the 26th verse, has no reference to the resurrection, as the Revised Version will show.

In the margin of the R. V. it is rendered *from* or *without* my flesh, etc. At the bottom of the page is a foot note rendering the whole passage thus: "And after my skin, even this body is destroyed, then *without my flesh* shall I see God." This is the American Com. If this verse from the 19th Chap. of Job were omitted entirely, nothing would be lost. For his part the writer likes best Dr. Townsend's version of this verse given on page 306 of his "Credo." Dr. Curry said a short time before he died that there should be a restatement of Christian beliefs. Would it not be well to bring before the next General Conference for its consideration the question of altering in the discipline the so-called Apostles Creed, where the question is asked, "Do you believe in the resurrection of the body?" so that it might read: "Do you believe in the resurrection *from* the dead?" This seems to the writer to be preferable, and would mean quite a different thing. Again, the discipline asks: "Dost thou believe in the Holy Ghost? Would it not be better to use the words Holy Spirit?" In the expression "The Holy Catholic Church," the word Catholic seems to be misleading to some minds; at least it always has to be accompanied with a footnote, or an explanation from the minister. Why not use such language as needs no explanation?

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